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have studied their craft among the Arabians. Magicians had need to come from a distance. Chaucer's Frankeleyn (country gentleman) is a steadfast believer in the arts of conjuration.

For oft at festes, I have herde saie  
That magetors, within a halle large  
Have made to comyn water in a barge,  
And in the halle rowin up and down.

The origin of secular music is so involved with the popular superstitions, manners, and customs of antiquity, that our quotations illustrative of this subject scarcely need an apology; and we break off for the present with the view of an orchestra playing before the king of France, at a public dinner, before the year 1300. The instruments are numerous and odd:—the kettle-drum, the flageolet, the cornet, the Latin harp, the Bohemian flute, the trumpet, the Moorish harp, and the fiddle. Can we wonder that foreign artists were early patronized?

*To be continued.*

#### ST. MARTIN'S HALL.

THE inauguration of the new Music Hall in Long Acre—an edifice which promises to be, when complete, one of the most spacious and effective choral concert rooms in the kingdom, has been the principal event of the late month, and of the opening musical season. On Monday, Feb. 11, the great Hall was opened to the public with a concert under the direction of Mr. John Hullah. About 1000 persons attended as auditors.

The length of the hall at present is between 70 and 80 feet, the width 55, and the height 40. But the design is not yet accomplished; 50 feet are to be added to the length of the room, which, when finished, will fulfil the conditions declared by those learned in acoustics to be most favourable to musical effect—viz., "the length something more than double the width, and the height the third of the length." The ceiling, flat in the middle, sloping at the sides, and laid out in framed compartments, will look very handsome when filled up and painted; while the walls, supplied with the galleries that are to stretch along the entire length of the north, south, and west sides, will be agreeably relieved of their naked aspect. The orchestra is constructed on the principle of gradual elevation, but approaches much less nearly to the perpendicular than that of Exeter-hall. As there is no organ at present, some artifice of division is advisable, for the better effect of double choruses; but in other respects the absence of that colossal obstruction has its advantages. The chorus, between 400 and 500 in number, summoned from the ranks of Mr. Hullah's upper singing-school, and the band, consisting of upwards of 70 performers, filled the orchestra to the extremities. The hall being also completely crammed, and the whole brilliantly lighted by a double row of elegantly formed chandeliers, suspended from the roof, the aspect presented to the eye was brilliant and animated. When Mr. Hullah took his place in the conductor's rostrum he was hailed by a burst of enthusiastic applause from every part of the building, a token of the high estimation in which he is held as well by the general public as by his own pupils.

It is impossible in the present unfinished condition of the building to decide upon its ultimate capability of musical effect; but what has been heard warrants very favourable prepossessions.

The most important novelty of the evening was the production of a Festival Anthem, "Let God arise," for a double choir, by a young English Composer, Mr. Henry Leslie. The *Times* gives the following criticism on this production:—

Mr. Leslie's Anthem, the words of which are wholly selected from the 68th psalm, is a work of more than ordinary promise. It opens with a grand full chorus in A major, "Let God arise," in which the young musician has proved himself capable of conducting a series of harmonies in eight vocal parts with great clearness. The *fugato* on the words "Let him, also, that hate him," with its close answer and pointed accent, though recalling a theme in one of the choruses of the *Messiah*, is ingenious and effective. A short tenor solo introduces a chorus in D, "So let the ungodly perish," of no particular note, which, without finishing, leads to a *soprano* air in F, "But let the righteous be glad." This is flowing, vocal, and harmonized with much taste. A few bars of *adagio* for the full choir form the preface to a chorus in A minor, "The earth shook," which is highly dramatic and expressive, although the passage in the key of D flat, and the subsequent enharmonic modulation are not easy for the chorus to sing in tune. Another *adagio* in three-four time, a pendant to this chorus, is less to our liking; there is too much modulation, and too little tune. The tenor air in E major, "Thou, O God," which comes next, is very melodious; the character is strictly devotional, and the effect of the violoncello *obligato* beautiful. The next chorus, "The Lord gave the word," in G, is one of the best in the anthem. With Handel's version of the same words before him, Mr. Leslie has contrived to be quite original, and at the same time impressive. The second part of this chorus, "Kings with their armies," evince a strong dramatic feeling, but towards the end the modulation is too redundant. A charming *duettino* in A minor, for soprano and tenor, "Give thanks, O Israel," which, in addition to a plaintive melody, is to be noted for the extreme refinement of the accompaniments, brings us to the final chorus in A major, "Sing unto God," the most elaborate and skilfully written in the entire work. The fugue on the words, "O sing praises," answered in the second bar, and varied by two episodic subjects, is conceived and carried out with remarkable ability. The instrumentation of this anthem, allowing for the modern tendency to make too liberal use of trombones, trumpets, &c., is exceedingly clear and effective. The choruses are all double choruses, sometimes written in two alternate choirs, sometimes in eight pure parts—an achievement demanding no less facility than knowledge. Altogether, Mr. Leslie's composition does him infinite credit. The mere attempt augurs a highly laudable ambition; but a success such as Mr. Leslie has obtained implies the possession of gifts that are accorded to few. As far as the chorus was concerned, nothing could be more satisfactory than the execution of the anthem, but the unaccountable absence of the second clarinet spoiled some of the best of the instrumental combinations. The reception of this work by the audience was throughout most flattering.

The other opinions of the contemporary press are not less favourable. We extract the following observations from the *Morning Chronicle*:—

The main interest of the concert lay in Mr. Leslie's "Festival Hymn," now for the first time performed. It speaks well for Mr. Hullah's ultimate purposes, that he should thus have inaugurated his new undertaking by the production of the work of a young English composer: it

is more than fortunate that this anthem should have fully justified so much courage and enterprise. We purpose analyzing the work in another shape—as a musical publication—and will therefore now only give the most brief record of its best points, premising that it is a production of merit more than proportionate to its pretensions, and calculated to reflect credit on contemporary musical art in this country. The opening chorus, "Let God arise," has a simple grandeur quite Handelian: and the chorus, "O God, when thou wentest forth," is, more especially in its opening, grand and solemn. The air, sung by Mr. Benson, "Thou, O God, didst send a gracious rain," is an exquisitely descriptive melody, which might have been written by Mendelssohn; and the duet, "Give thanks," is impressed with a character of pure devotional feeling from which we augur much of Mr. Leslie's future successes. But more of these matters hereafter. All we now can do is to record the complete success of this anthem, and to congratulate Mr. Hullah on having commenced his undertaking under such favourable circumstances.

It will be necessary in the general advance of choral performance not to overlook the encouragement of composers and composition; and most fortunate will it be if this first step is successfully pursued.

The other important features of the concert were Mendelssohn's *Lauda Sion*, and a selection of Choruses from Mozart's *Idomeneo*. With respect to the former, the *Times* observes:—

The execution of this fine work was such as to prove that, while unprovided with a *locale* for public performance, Mr. Hullah has not allowed his pupils to remain idle. The evidence of constant practice and progressing improvement was undeniable. The massive choral effects were produced with fulness and decision, while the lights and shadows of expression were successfully obtained. A new hearing discloses fresh beauties, and strengthens our first impression that the *Lauda Sion* is one of Mendelssohn's most perfect works.

A fresh impulse to the music of the metropolis may be expected as the result of this new Institution.

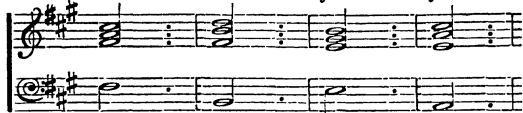
### Correspondence.

To the Editor of the "Musical Times."

SIR,—The following extract is from Handel's *Eleventh Concerto*. If any of your musical correspondents will favor me by explaining the harmony, they will much oblige  
A CONSTANT READER, Sydenham.



[The explanation requested by our correspondent is easily made. The harmony of this phrase of canonical imitation and contrary motion, so characteristic of Handel, can only be misunderstood under the impression that each Bass note must necessarily be the Bass of the Treble with which it moves. But we must take the passage in the gross, and allow for the passing notes, which only clash on the unaccented parts of the bar, namely—the 2nd and 3rd crotchets. The root of the harmony is evidently—



The passing notes which clash as discords occur alternately

in the Treble and the Bass; but the ear makes allowance for them, as on the accented part or first crotchet of the bar it is always gratified by the fundamental harmony, or its inversion. At the very entrance of the imitation in the Bass (\*), the ear perceives the true Bass to the preceding crotchet in the Treble. The effect and character of this bold passage, however, will be best appreciated when the phrase is heard in its place in the composition in which it is led up to, and not when it is extracted and isolated.—ED.]

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Romanticus can purchase the article he wants at any music shop, at varying prices from 10s. to £1 1s. The P.S. to his letter can be answered by application to 69, Dean-street.

A Working Glazier.—Many thanks for his satisfactory letter. The arrangement he proposes shall receive consideration.

### Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

MUSIC HALLS.—A zealous and useful article upon this subject appeared in the *Sheffield Times* of the 16th February, recommending the erection of a public room in that town for the purpose of great choral performances, to be the *People's Music-room*. Every large manufacturing town, and where there is a choral society established, should possess the advantage of such a means for holding public performances. The writer well says "that the rich possess every means to have their private concerts, both vocal and instrumental; and yet, they rarely extend beyond solo airs; or at most, duets and trios;" whereas, on the other hand, he says, "go among the class of respectable artisans, shoemakers, butchers, warehousemen,—in the town, and in the villages round about—here are the men, who (shame to the wealthy and highly educated!) uphold the congregational singing in our churches and chapels!—here are the men who form themselves into bands, and who play at sick-club feasts and other festivals—and many of these are familiar with Handel's *Messiah* from the first chord to the last note of the "Amen," and can sing a part in the Hallelujah Chorus, every note from memory. Do not these facts betoken among the rugged horny-handed population, a deeply rooted feeling of a kind which deserves encouragement? Do they not bear testimony that beneath a rugged exterior and homely speech, a germ of precious fruit is hid? Do they not mark the kindling flashes of the soul's "glorious light within?" If not, how comes it that these men, rude in speech, and without most of the "means and appliances" which easy circumstances can command, can attain to a knowledge of Handel, and enter into the spirit of that mighty master?

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the CHORAL FUND was held on Ash Wednesday; when the balance sheet was produced, from which it appears that an improvement in the finances has taken place in the past year: this, however, is mainly owing to the addition of the sum of £223, the proceeds of a concert given by Madlle. Lind for the benefit of the musical institutions of the country. The payments to widows, orphans, &c., amount to nearly £400.

MENDELSSOHN'S *St. Paul* was repeated on the 15th February, by the Sacred Harmonic Society, at the express desire of H.R.H. Prince Albert, who appeared fully to appreciate both the genius and the development of this great work upon the present occasion, and remained to the close of the performance.